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Organizational matters

Annual Report of the Under Secretary-General/Executive Director on the Strategic Plan, 2014–2017

Summary

This report provides an overview of results achieved in 2017, during the final year of implementation of the UN-Women Strategic Plan 2014–2017, and takes stock of progress made through the entire four-year cycle. The report also addresses progress on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 71/243 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the UN system (QCPR).

Based on the analysis of each development outcome and organizational effectiveness and efficiency output, UN-Women has achieved the majority of the objectives in its results frameworks. Insights and lessons learned from the past four years have informed the development of the Strategic Plan 2018–2021.

A draft decision is included in section V.

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I. Introduction

1. 2017 saw unprecedented global attention to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, with important progress in several areas. The #MeToo movement gave rise to an unparalleled number of women speaking out about sexual harassment, violence and abuse across the media, politics, workplaces and communities. Countries have continued to strengthen laws to eliminate violence against women and harmful practices. The agreed conclusions of the 61st session of the Commission on the Status of Women established path-breaking commitments to eliminate barriers to women's empowerment in the world of work.

2. Despite these developments, women continue to be severely under-represented in leadership and decision-making across all arenas; major gender gaps remain in the economy; and violence against women persists at alarmingly high levels. The role of women's organizations in advancing gender equality is hampered by funding cuts, the lack of a safe and enabling environment and the targeting of women's human rights defenders. Growing insecurity, displacement and the detrimental impacts of climate change also put progress towards gender equality and women's empowerment at risk. Challenges are particularly acute for those who face multiple forms of discrimination and who are most at risk of being left behind.

3. Against this background, 2017 was a year of consolidation and growth for UN-Women. This final progress report on the 2014–2017 Strategic Plan describes significant results achieved since 2014, which reflect UN-Women's growing capacity to leverage its triple mandate, substantive expertise, partnerships and evidence base to deliver for women and girls. This capacity positions UN-Women strategically in the context of ongoing discussions to reposition the UN Development System in support of better system-wide results for women and girls.

4. UN-Women has significantly contributed to strengthening global norms and standards and translating them into action at the country level. Flagship Programming Initiatives (FPIs) have sharpened UN-Women's programmatic focus, provided a common framework for collaboration at national level, and supported resource mobilization efforts. The UN System-Wide Action Plan has become a model benchmarking tool, strengthening accountability for gender equality commitments and enhancing gender mainstreaming across the UN system. All these efforts have been underpinned by UN-Women's commitment to reach women and girls who are at greatest risk of being left behind.

5. In the last four years, UN-Women demonstrated its capacity to deliver transformative programming with efficiency and impact. UN-Women rolled out several business improvement processes, including a suite of programme management information systems to improve forecasting, planning, monitoring and reporting. In 2017, UN-Women has reached its highest total income since inception.

6. These results and lessons learned, as well as an extensive consultative process, have informed the development of the new Strategic Plan 2018–2021, which was adopted by the Executive Board in 2017. The new Strategic Plan continues to support the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, is aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, has clear results pathways that draw on theories of change, and leverages UN-Women's unique role in catalyzing action, convening partners, mobilizing and advocating for change, and supporting resource mobilization for gender equality and women's empowerment. The common chapter with UNDP, UNICEF and UNFPA provides an important basis to enhance coherence and joint action.

AT A GLANCE

Since 2014, UN-Women, in collaboration with partners, contributed to the following:

- 17 constitutional reform processes supported
- 41 countries, with a combined female population of over 2 billion, adopted policy frameworks for women's economic empowerment
- 52 countries, with a combined female population of over 1.5 billion, strengthened legislation to address violence against women and girls
- 43 countries, with a combined female population of over 1.48 billion, increased budget allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment
- 1,012 companies signed onto the WEPs
- Over 7.5 million practitioners accessed expert knowledge at endVAWnow.org
- Over 300 female military officers have completed UN-Women-supported training courses before deployment in peace operations
- 71 experts deployed to support sexual and gender-based violence investigations, including to national authorities and the International Criminal Court
- Civil servants of national AIDS coordinating bodies in 55 countries increased their capacities for gender mainstreaming in the HIV response
- A five-fold increase in the deployment of gender expertise to humanitarian crises
- An average annual participation of 2,500 officials and more than 3,700 civil society representatives at the CSW
- An increase from 640,000 social media followers in 2014 to 6.5 million in 2017
- 114,018 people trained by the Training Centre, 24,545 people who have completed the I Know Gender course

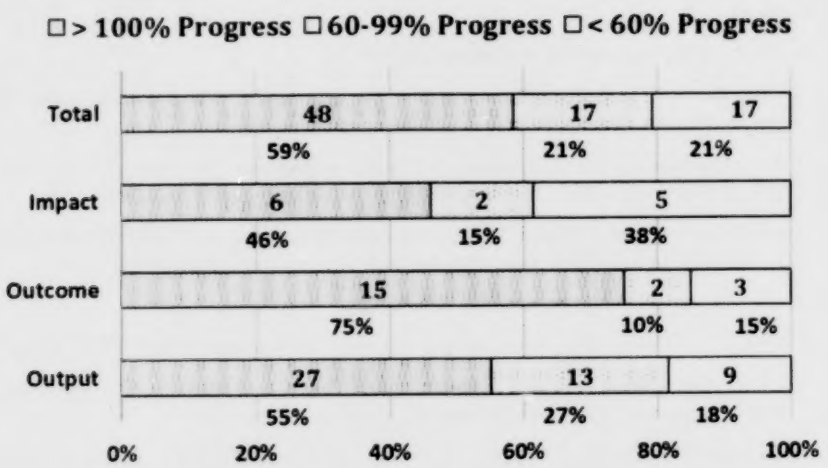
In 2017 alone, the following results were also achieved:

- 27 laws amended or reformed in 17 countries, with a combined female population of almost 164 million
- Nearly 7,000 women leaders, aspiring candidates and elected public officials in 32 countries with strengthened capacity
- 121,000 crisis affected women and girls assisted in 31 countries
- Economic empowerment and livelihood services delivered for over 35,000 women and girls in humanitarian situations
- 59 safe spaces and 67 multi-purpose centres run in humanitarian programmes
- 70 per cent of UNDAFs feature gender-specific results

II. Assessment of development results

7. Between 2014 and 2017, UN-Women delivered programmes in a total of 132 countries. At the end of the Strategic Plan period, UN-Women's performance against its targets is positive with 80 per cent of targets fully or largely met (Figure 1).

Figure 1.
Achievement of Strategic Plan Targets



8. It is notable that this performance corresponds quite closely to funding levels, with a funding gap of nearly 20 per cent compared to integrated budget targets for 2014–2017.

9. With only three targets below 60 per cent, performance is particularly strong at the outcome level. There has been significant progress at the output level over the 2014–2017 period, with nine additional targets met or reaching at least 60 per cent in 2017 alone.

10. An analysis of indicators below 60 per cent showed that there is no single explanation but a mix of factors at play, including over-ambitious target-setting, funding constraints, imprecise indicator formulation which compromised reporting, data gaps, and lack of prioritization of specific outputs by field offices. Nevertheless, poor performance at the output level did not always translate into gaps at the outcome and impact levels and is more reflective of sporadic gaps than systemic problems in UN-Women's results structure.

11. Building on this analysis, UN-Women has further strengthened the results chain in its new integrated results and resources framework 2018–2021, developed theories of change for each output, and provided a greater level of accuracy in the level of attribution of results. It will be essential for UN-Women to continue its work in results definition, including joint results with the rest of the UN system, in the course of the new Strategic Plan.

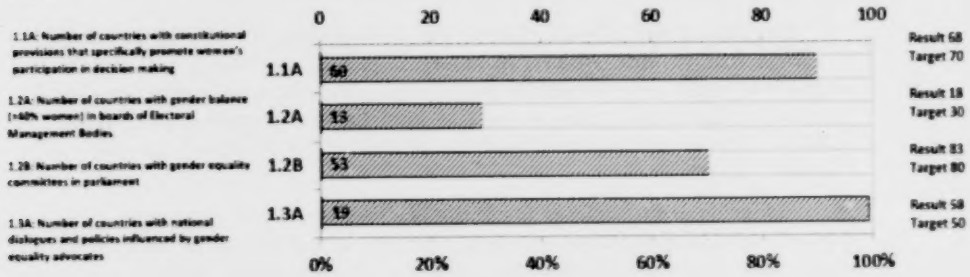
12. The analysis of the impact areas below presents results for the 2014–2017 period with specific examples from 2017.

A. Impact area 1: women lead and participate in decision-making at all levels

From 2014 to 2017, in this impact area:

13. Over the course of the Strategic Plan 2014–2017, UN-Women has made significant progress to increase women's leadership and political participation, by contributing to gender-responsive legislation and constitutional reforms, support for women's participation in politics and increasing women's representation in national parliaments and local governments, and support for gender-responsive political institutions (Figure 2).[1]

Figure 2.



14. In total, UN-Women contributed to 17 constitutional reform processes between 2014 and 2017. In 2017, UN-Women worked in Nepal for the effective implementation of the constitutional provisions related to women's political participation, resulting in the election of 14,000 women at the local level. In Georgia, UN-Women supported constitutional reforms to provide guarantees for gender equality, including special measures on women's representation. El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala and Trinidad and Tobago enacted legal reforms to eliminate child marriage in 2017, with the support of UN-Women.

15. UN-Women worked closely with Parliaments around the world for the establishment of gender equality committees in 83 countries. Forty-eight parliaments have approved gender-responsive legislation with UN-Women's support. In Haiti, UN-Women supported the Parliament in 2017 for the development of a gender equality strategy with a formal commitment to prevent violence against women in elections. In Niger, UN-Women's support engaged 121 parliamentarians, leading them to conduct outreach to around 100,000 women on gender-based violence and establish a specialized gender unit in Parliament.

[1] The Fund for Gender Equality contributes to this impact area, as well as impact area 2. See Annex 4 for more details.

16. As a result of UN-Women's support in 2017, in coordination with UN partners, boards of 18 national Electoral Management Bodies reached 40 per cent or more women. Over 50 per cent of countries receiving UN Electoral Assistance adopted reforms to promote women's political participation. UN-Women's support led the Bolivian Electoral Tribunal to enact a gender policy, committing to gender-responsive electoral processes to increase women's participation as voters, candidates and electoral officials. In DRC, UN-Women supported the electoral commission to increase the number of women voters registered, resulting in an estimated 46 per cent of women voters registered.

17. In line with the Flagship Programme on Women's Political Empowerment, UN-Women has strengthened the capacity of nearly 7,000 aspiring and elected women leaders in 2017. In Algeria, capacity-strengthening for women candidates to 2017 local elections contributed to increasing women's representation in local assemblies and governorates, with an additional 600 women elected at the governorate level. In Kenya, UN-Women trained more than 400 female aspiring candidates and 149 female nominated candidates, contributing to the election of three women governors and three women senators for the first time.

18. Between 2014 and 2017, with UN-Women's support, gender equality advocates influenced national dialogues and policies in 58 countries. In Cameroon, UN-Women convened a coalition to promote women's representation in the 2018 election, resulting in the establishment of gender-responsive voter registration. In Solomon Islands, UN-Women supported a coalition of women's organisations to secure political support for provincial gender policies and reserved seats.

19. UN-Women has worked closely with UN partners in this area, mainly the Department of Political Affairs, including as part of an interagency coordination mechanism on electoral assistance. UNDP continues to be a key partner with several joint projects and initiatives, as well as joint knowledge products, including the iKNOW Politics portal, developed in partnership with IDEA and the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

20. Achieving gender balance in politics is a long-term process requiring efforts to prevent backsliding. Unfavourable legal frameworks and increasing violence against women in politics are persistent challenges that UN-Women has integrated in its new Strategic Plan, which also recognizes the mutually reinforcing relationship between women's political participation and leadership, women's access to justice and gender-responsive planning and budgeting by bringing them together under one outcome.

Women's access to justice

While access to justice was not explicitly included in the 2014–2017 Strategic Plan, the importance of this area of work to eliminate gender-based discrimination made it grow in importance in UN-Women's work since 2014. As a result, the new strategic plan includes a dedicated result on the issue and a Flagship Programming Initiative was launched.

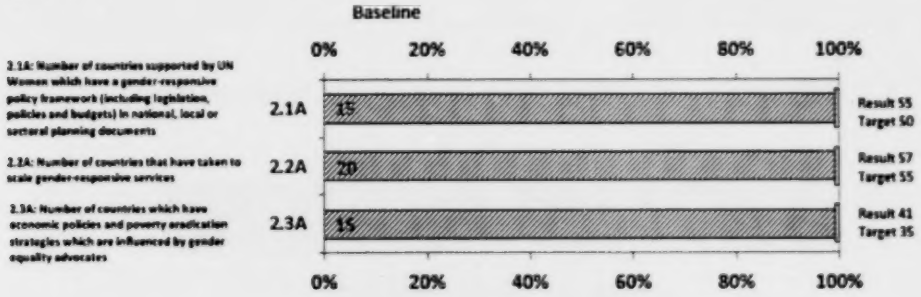
In 2017, UN-Women supported Bolivia in starting to develop new Family, Civil and Criminal Codes; helped more than 1,000 women receive legal aid in Uganda; and supported the Government in Viet Nam in undertaking a perception survey of the justice system among women. UN-Women launched a "Practitioner's Toolkit on Women's Access to Justice Programming" with UNDP, UNODC and OHCHR in support of SDG 16.

B. Impact area 2: women, especially the poorest and most excluded, are economically empowered and benefit from development

From 2014 to 2017, in this impact area:

21. Over 2014–2017, UN-Women made substantial contributions to women's economic empowerment, exceeding all targets at the outcome level (Figure 3). Key achievements include the adoption of national frameworks for women's economic empowerment, enhancements to women's livelihoods and support to gender equality advocates to influence national strategies and policies.

Figure 3.



22. UN-Women's support was pivotal for the adoption or implementation of national plans, policies, strategies and legislation to promote women's economic empowerment in 55 countries. In 2017, with UN-Women's support, the Central Bureau of Statistics of Sudan generated sex-disaggregated data for the National Poverty Reduction Strategy. UN-Women, in partnership with the African Development Bank, contributed to the adoption of regulations to promote the rights of domestic workers in Cabo Verde.

23. UN-Women contributed to scaling up and delivering services to women in 57 countries, including social assistance and employment services, and supporting skills development and entrepreneurship opportunities for women in 36 countries in 2017 alone. In line with the commitment to leave no one behind, UN-Women worked with partners in Guatemala to improve the knowledge of 1,650 rural indigenous women on agriculture, food security, and entrepreneurship to improve their agricultural production and access to markets. In Georgia, UN-Women provided livelihood

support grants and capacity development on entrepreneurship to nearly 2,500 women affected by conflict or internally displaced.

24. UN-Women strengthened the capacity of gender equality advocates to influence economic policies and poverty eradication strategies in 41 countries over the course of the Strategic Plan. In 2017, in Brazil, advocacy efforts led by the National Federation of Domestic Workers with UN-Women were crucial for the ratification of ILO Convention 189 on Domestic Workers, extending full labour rights to the 7 million domestic workers in Brazil, most of whom are women. In Timor-Leste, UN-Women's advocacy efforts with civil society contributed to the adoption of a new law strengthening women's rights to own land and property.

25. UN-Women's approach to climate-smart agriculture developed in its FPI was endorsed by other UN agencies in the context of the UN Integrated Strategy for the Sahel 2018–2022. Gender equality, women's empowerment and climate action are amongst the priority areas for the implementation of the strategy.

26. The Rome-based agencies, FAO, IFAD and WFP, have been key partners of UN-Women for this impact area. UN-Women has also strengthened its partnership with International Financial Institutions, especially the World Bank and regional development banks. Close collaboration with specialized agencies, such as the ILO, were instrumental, particularly in supporting a strengthened normative agenda and its implementation for decent work and social protection.

27. Since 2014 and in line with the evaluation of this impact area, UN-Women refocused its work away from smaller-scale interventions toward more systemic advocacy, reforms, and policy implementation, which accelerated progress at the outcome level. The new Strategic Plan focuses on three areas of UN-Women's comparative advantage: policies on decent work and social protection; promotion of women's entrepreneurship; and women's engagement in climate-resilient agriculture.

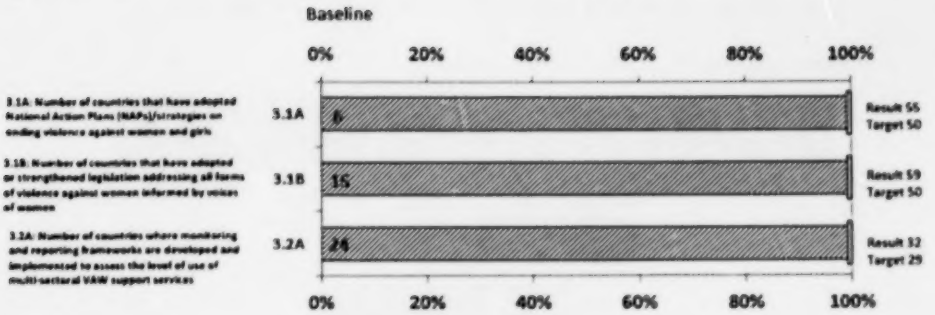
C. Impact area 3: ending violence against women and girls

From 2014 to 2017, in this impact area:

28. UN-Women achieved all its outcome targets on ending all forms of violence against women and girls by strengthening legislation and policies, improving quality services for survivors, and driving policy shifts that better reflect the importance of addressing social norms, and preventing violence against women in private and public spaces (Figure 4).[2]

[2] The UN Trust Fund in support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women contributes to this impact area. See Annex 4.

Figure 4.



29. In 2017, 21 countries supported by UN-Women strengthened national legislation to prevent and respond to violence against women, while 12 countries adopted national action plans and strategies. In Tunisia, UN-Women supported civil society advocacy leading to the adoption of a comprehensive law addressing violence against women. UN-Women also supported Tunisia, Jordan and Lebanon in repealing rape laws that exempted perpetrators from prosecution and punishment if they married their victims.

30. UN-Women achieved commitments from Government, NGOs and donors to increase the availability of shelters in Ethiopia, including in remote communities. In Fiji, UN-Women partnered with Oceania Rugby to provide more than 2,000 girls and boys with the opportunity, through sports, to learn how to prevent violence against women and girls. In line with the commitment to leave no one behind, UN-Women has supported the provision of services to women and girls who have experienced violence, with a special focus on women with disabilities.

31. At the first-ever Global Mayors' Meeting on Gender Equality, 12 city governments strengthened their commitments to address sexual harassment in public spaces as part of safe cities. In the Philippines, good practices of Quezon Safe Cities programme were shared with 16 other cities in Metro Manila to support scaling-up the initiative.

32. Working in partnership with other UN agencies to leverage expertise and resources has been a focus of the work on ending violence against women. Through the Joint Global Programme on Essential Services for women and girls subject to violence, UN-Women in partnership with UNODC, UNDP, UNFPA and WHO, has piloted guidelines for the health, justice and policing and social services sectors.

33. Building on existing Flagship Programme Initiatives, UN-Women became a founding partner of the "Spotlight Initiative", a partnership between the United Nations and the European Union, which will provide large-scale investments to integrate a comprehensive approach to ending violence against women and girls, with a focus on leaving no one behind. As a Sustainable Development Goal model fund, the initiative, which brings together UNDP, UNFPA and UN-Women, reflects an innovative approach for catalyzing an enhanced UN response.

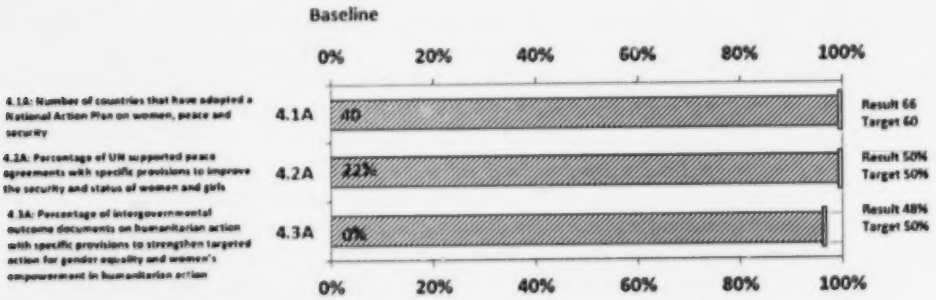
34. A stronger focus is required not only on expanding work on strengthening the availability of services for survivors, but also preventing violence against women and girls before it happens in private as well as public spaces, notably through transforming discriminatory social norms. The Strategic Plan 2018–2021 reflects these lessons.

D. Impact area 4: peace and security and humanitarian action are shaped by women's leadership and participation

From 2014 to 2017, in this impact area:

35. UN-Women achieved significant progress to ensure women's participation and leadership in peace and security and humanitarian action, achieving two (and nearly achieving the third) outcome targets in this area (Figure 5). UN-Women supported increased women's participation in mediation and conflict-prevention efforts; enhanced the gender-responsiveness of rule of law and security sector reform; ensured that efforts to counter violent extremism and terrorism are gender-responsive; strengthened humanitarian coordination mechanisms and provided support to women and girls in crisis contexts.

Figure 5.



36. A total of 66 countries have adopted national action plans on women, peace and security, 72 per cent with monitoring and evaluation frameworks. In 2017, UN-Women supported the development of action plans in Jordan, Nepal and the League of Arab States. The cross-regional Women, Peace and Security Focal Points Network, of which UN-Women is the secretariat, grew from 45 to nearly 80 Member States and Regional Organizations.

37. UN-Women continued its engagement with the Security Council. In 2017, nine women civil society leaders participated in briefings to the Council with UN-Women's support. UN-Women's partnership with the Peacebuilding Support Office has increased funding for activities advancing gender equality from the Peacebuilding Fund from 20 per cent in 2016 to 36 per cent in 2017.

38. In Guatemala, UN-Women supported the survivors from the Sepur Zarco case in pursuit of truth, justice and reparation, resulting in the first-ever conviction for conflict-related sexual violence in a domestic court. In Liberia, UN-Women successfully worked with the Government and UN partners to focus on inclusivity, women's participation and leadership in the Liberia Transition Plan.

39. Since 2014, UN-Women has provided gender expertise and supported women's meaningful participation in peace processes in Colombia, Syria and Yemen. In Yemen, women's organizations supported by UN-Women provided specific recommendations and increased their influence in the peace process.

40. 2017 saw an increase in support for joint rule-of-law programmes in the Central African Republic, Mali, the State of Palestine and Somalia. In the State of Palestine, UN-Women's advocacy resulted in increased representation of women in justice and security institutions and greater participation of women's organizations in justice institutions.

41. Since 2014, over 300 female military officers have completed UN-Women-supported training for deployment in peace operations. In 2017, UN-Women, in partnership with Justice Rapid Response, deployed 23 sexual and gender-based violence investigators, gender advisors and mentors to support investigations and justice processes in 11 countries, including truth commissions in Mali, where 20 per cent of the commission's key staff are now women. In total since 2014, UN-Women deployed 71 experts to support investigations and accountability processes, including to national authorities and the International Criminal Court.

42. Ensuring the gender-responsiveness of preventing and countering violent extremism and terrorism has been a growing priority for UN-Women during this Strategic Plan cycle in close collaboration with CTED and UNOCT. In 2017, UN-Women initiated one of its largest programmes with over 3,200 women in communities in Indonesia and Bangladesh to build social cohesion and prevent radicalization. In Bangladesh, over 90,000 individuals have attended 226 community theatre shows focusing on community harmony.

43. Working coherently with other UN entities is fundamental to achieving progress on the women, peace and security agenda. In this area, UN-Women works closely with DPA, DPKO, the Office of the SRSG on Sexual Violence and Conflict, PBSO, UNDP and UNICEF, among others. In 2017 UN-Women and OHCHR supported UN investigations. Along with EOSG, OHCHR, UNHCR and UNODC, UN-Women is a core member of the Global Focal Point arrangement on police, justice and corrections.

44. Over the 2014–2017 period, demands for UN-Women in dynamic security contexts continued to increase. Translation of global commitments into concrete action remains a challenge and the new Strategic Plan places particular focus on this aspect.

Humanitarian action

45. UN-Women's engagement in humanitarian action has significantly evolved during this Strategic Plan period. UN-Women has sharpened its humanitarian strategy and expanded its activities in this area.

46. In 2017, UN-Women supported coordination mechanisms for humanitarian activities in 16 countries, and provided direct humanitarian services for 121,000 crisis-affected women and girls. Across 31 countries, UN-Women provided economic empowerment and livelihood services to 35,000 women and girls, and education opportunities for 3,700 girls in humanitarian settings. UN-Women deployed technical experts to nine humanitarian crises, a five-fold increase compared to 2014 deployments.

47. In response to Hurricane Irma in the Caribbean, and working with UNFPA, UN-Women distributed essential supplies for over 500 women and giris in Antigua and Barbuda and the British Virgin Islands. In Tanzania, UN-Women offered skills training, livelihood opportunities and referral to gender-based violence services to Burundian women refugees. In Cameroon, UN-Women provided integrated income-generation and protection services to 5,400 refugees, IDPs, former Boko Haram female hostages and vulnerable women from host communities. In Bangladesh, UN-Women negotiated access for female midwives and health workers to the Rohingya refugee camps, potentially saving the lives of hundreds of pregnant and other women refugees that required emergency medical attention.

48. UN-Women co-chaired the *Gender in Humanitarian Action Reference Group* of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), providing technical support to operationalize its commitment to gender equality in humanitarian action. In 2017, UN-Women led the development of the new *Gender Equality and Women's and Girls' Empowerment in Humanitarian Action Policy* of the IASC, updating the global humanitarian system's commitments to gender equality and establishing a formal accountability framework to monitor its delivery.

49. UN-Women's partners in humanitarian action with a large group of agencies, including OCHA, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNHCR, UNISDR, IFRC and WFP, to implement specific programmes, including its humanitarian Flagship Programmes.

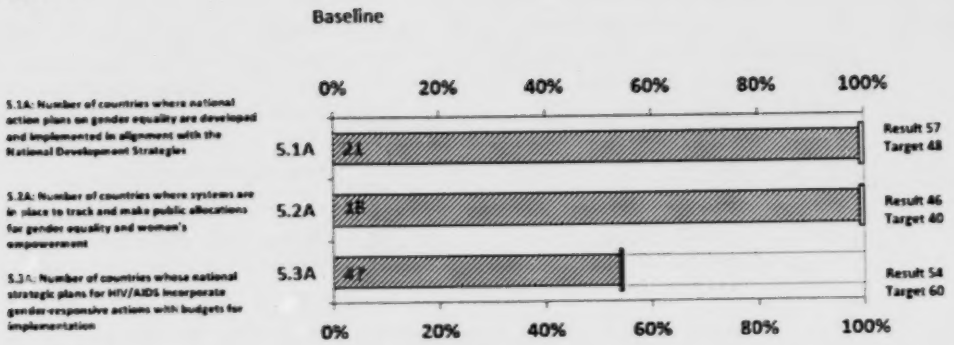
50. UN-Women has developed innovative approaches, such as blockchain technology and cash-based interventions, to enable transformative change for crisis-affected women and girls. These developments have been reflected in the new Strategic Plan, focusing on UN-Women's role of monitoring and holding to account the humanitarian system on gender equality commitments and on the delivery of the Flagship Programme Initiatives in this area.

E. Impact area 5: governance and national planning fully reflect accountability for gender equality commitments and priorities

From 2014 to 2017, in this impact area:

51. UN-Women has supported significant progress in integrating gender equality into national, sectoral and local plans and budgets, achieving and/or exceeding two of its three outcome level targets (Figure 6). Since 2014, UN-Women contributed to increased alignment between national gender equality action plans and national development strategies; the establishment of systems to track gender equality allocations; and stronger capacities of governments, gender equality advocates and women's organizations to integrate gender perspectives into planning and budgeting cycles.

Figure 6.



52. From 2014 to 2017, a total of 46 countries have put in place systems to track budget allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment and make the data publicly available. With UN-Women's support, the Dominican Republic has established a system to track gender equality allocations, demonstrating a consistent increase in allocations since 2015. In Serbia, UN-Women's support for gender-responsive budgeting has led to gender equality being included in budget objectives and programmes of 47 government institutions.

53. Since 2014, 43 countries have reported increased budget allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment. In Mexico, with UN-Women's support, the budget allocation to gender equality work has increased by 37 per cent since 2012. In line with the Flagship Programme on Transformative Financing, a new partnership with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) will strengthen the capacities of governments to implement gender-responsive budgeting.

54. Twenty-four countries in 2017 alone developed and implemented national action plans for gender equality and mainstreamed gender perspectives in their national development strategies. With UN-Women's support, Cabo Verde successfully integrated gender equality across its new National Strategic Development Plan as part of localizing the Sustainable Development Goals. As part of its commitment to leave no one behind, UN-Women supported the engagement of vulnerable groups of women in Moldova to shape strategies for the second National Gender Equality Strategy with the Government.

55. From 2014 to 2017, UN-Women's support resulted in integrating gender equality actions with budgets into national HIV strategies in 54 countries. In Zimbabwe, UN-Women supported organizations of women living with HIV to successfully advocate for the integration of specific actions to support HIV prevention and care for adolescent girls and women, with an approved associated budget of USD 8 million. In 2017, UN-Women strengthened the capacity of the Viet Nam Authority of HIV/AIDS Control to effectively track the gender dimensions of HIV responses.

56. Results were achieved by working across the planning and budgeting cycle, and across fiscal policies and legislation. Further, the evaluation of UN-Women's approach to supporting gender equality in the context of HIV/AIDS found that the emphasis on strengthening capacity of the national AIDS coordinating bodies and engaging women living with HIV was a significant value added. Lessons learnt from this impact area have informed the development of the 2018–2021 Strategic Plan, which presents a holistic framework for gender-responsive governance and participation.

Responding to the data challenges of monitoring the SDGs for women and girls

In response to significant gaps for gender-responsive monitoring of the SDGs, UN-Women has worked with partners to lead the development of standards and methodologies in several areas, including Indicator 5.1.1 (legal frameworks to promote, enforce and monitor equality and non-discrimination on the basis of sex), 5.5.1b (proportion of women in local government) and 5.c.1 (systems to track and make public allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment).

A key achievement of this work in 2017 is the reclassification by the IAEG-SDGs of indicators 5.5.1b and 5.c.1 as Tier II, recognizing that internationally accepted methodology and standard was successfully developed. A methodology was also developed by UN-Women and partners for Indicator 5.1.1.

To further address data gaps, particularly in the context of SDG monitoring, UN-Women's work on gender statistics has grown significantly with "Making Every Woman and Girl Count", a Flagship Programme that aims to bring about a radical shift in how gender statistics are created and used. As a result, UN-Women has incorporated an output on data in the 2018–2021 Strategic Plan.

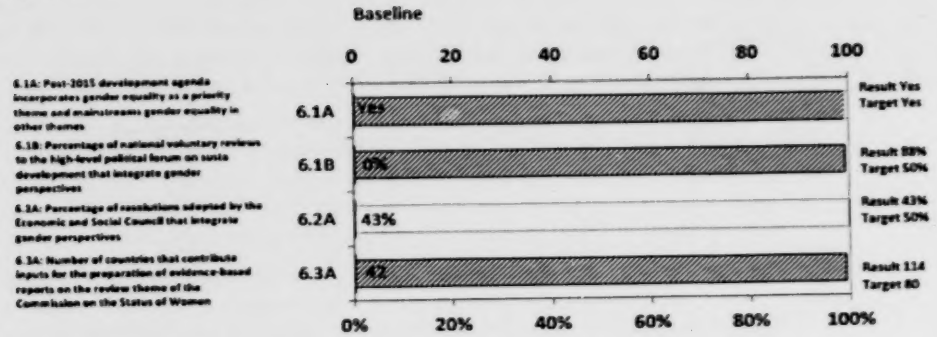
F. Impact area 6: a comprehensive and dynamic set of global norms, policies and standards on gender equality and women's empowerment

From 2014 to 2017, in this impact area:

Contributes to all the SDGs

57. The 2014–2017 period has been marked by significant successes in UN-Women's contribution to the development of global norms, policies and standards on gender equality and women's empowerment (Figure 7).

Figure 7.



58. In particular, UN-Women's substantive analysis, stakeholder engagement and advocacy supported the reflection of gender equality as a stand-alone goal and cross-cutting priority in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as well as a strong commitment to gender equality in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. Building on these milestones, UN-Women supported processes to monitor their gender-responsive implementation. In 2017, the Entity made substantial contributions to the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, which included the review of SDG 5, including by co-leading analysis of gender equality issues and providing expertise on the linkages between SDG 5 and the gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda, which fed into the Ministerial Declaration.

59. Since 2014, there has been significant growth of and increased engagement in the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). The CSW delivered several substantive outcomes, including the Political Declaration marking the 20th Anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and the agreed conclusions adopted at the 60th session with a roadmap for the gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

60. In 2017, 2,130 officials and more than 3,900 civil society organizations participated in the CSW. UN-Women supported preparations for the 61st session, in close collaboration with the ILO on the substantive preparations, and by organizing regional preparatory meetings and consultations, convening a multi-stakeholder forum and providing substantive support to informal consultations. UN-Women created opportunities for intergenerational dialogue by supporting the voices of youth feminist leaders.

61. UN-Women focused on the integration of gender perspectives in other normative processes, such as climate change, HIV/AIDS, sustainable cities and human settlements, migration and the situation of least developed countries. In its engagement with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, UN-Women's technical and substantive support over the last five years contributed to the adoption of the first Gender Action Plan at the Conference of Parties in 2017.

62. UN-Women also provided substantive support to ECOSOC on gender mainstreaming and to the Forum for Financing for Development, which resulted in gender equality investments being recognized as essential to sustainable development. UN-Women provided substantive expertise to the negotiations of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, resulting in its resolution reflecting a commitment to mainstreaming a gender perspective.

63. From 2014 to 2017, UN-Women supported 64 Governments reporting under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

(CEDAW) or the Universal Periodic Review of the Human Rights Council, working in coordination with OHCHR and UNCTs. In 2017, UN-Women supported Colombia to report to the CEDAW Committee, including through South-South cooperation. In Nepal, UN-Women's support enabled the National Women's Commission to advocate for policy and legal reforms to address the CEDAW concluding observations.

64. UN-Women worked in close collaboration with the Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council, in particular the work of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, including through the UN-Women/European Union Initiative to End Violence against Women and Girls in the Western Balkans and Turkey and a global study on transitional justice.

65. The strengthening of global norms, policies and standards on gender equality and women's empowerment continued to be a foundation for UN-Women's operational activities. This was further reflected in the results structure of the new Strategic Plan.

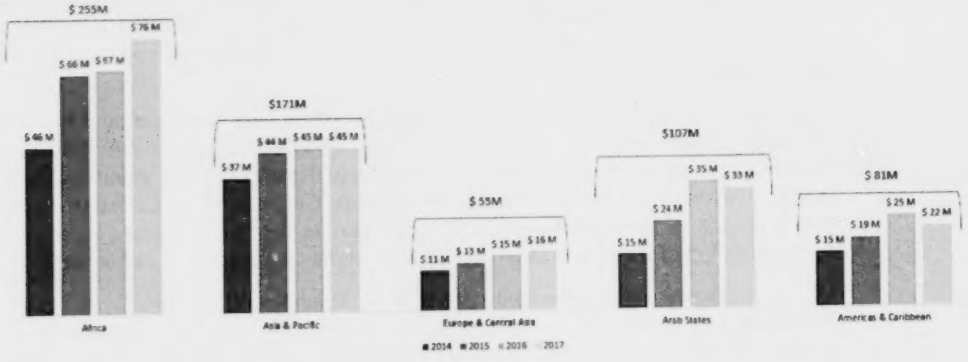
G. Programme expenditures and type of contribution

66. Total programme expenditures between 2014 and 2017 reached USD 915.3 million, with USD 249 million implemented in 2017. Expenditures in the field increased by 34 per cent over the four-year period, demonstrating growing partner confidence and success in resource mobilization. This growth was achieved alongside satisfactory corporate audits, reflecting UN-Women's capacity to implement, supported by streamlined business processes.

67. Geographically, the highest level of programme expenditures was in sub-Saharan Africa, followed by Asia-Pacific (Figure 8). Thematically, ending violence against women and girls had the highest expenditure (USD 258 million), followed by women, peace and security and humanitarian action (USD 212 million).

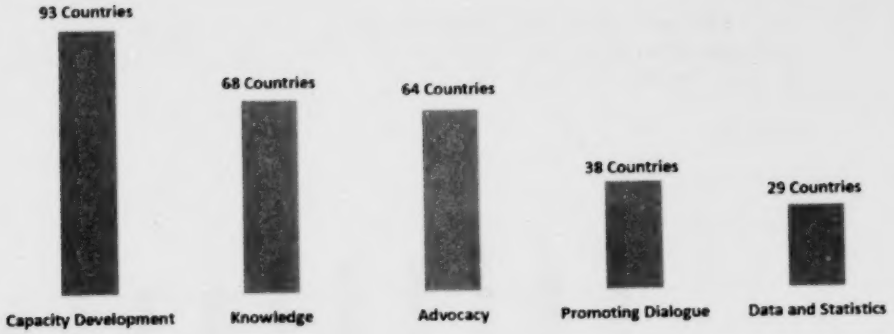
68. These trends were also supported by an increase in programmatic focus, with UN-Women achieving a 56 per cent reduction in the total number of outcomes pursued by all offices, driven in part by adoption of the Flagship Programming Initiatives.

Figure 8.



69. In 2017, capacity development continued to be prioritized in UN-Women's work, with 57 per cent of funds dedicated to this category (Figure 9). In the Strategic Plan 2018–2021, UN-Women has clarified the types of support it provides to better align them with its comparative advantages and the QCPR.

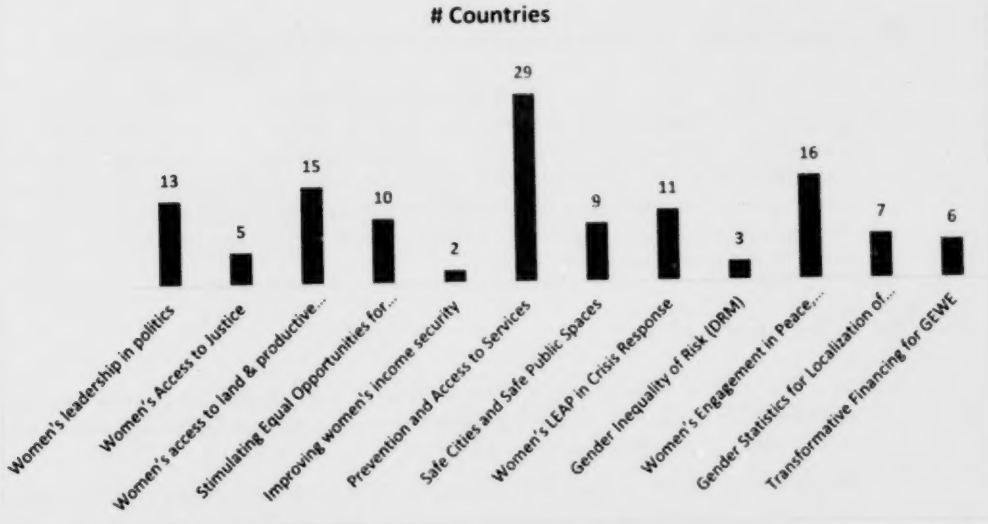
Figure 9.



H. Flagship Programming Initiatives

70. A key development to strengthen UN-Women's programming between 2014 and 2017 has been the development of Flagship Programming Initiatives (FPIs). In 2017, 57 per cent of development results from 49 country offices were aligned with FPIs theories of change. The high adoption rate (Figure 8) indicates a sharpened programmatic focus, provides a common framework for collaboration at national level, and supports resource mobilization efforts. Of note is the FPI on "prevention of violence against women and access to essential services", which was adopted by 30 country offices.

Figure 10.

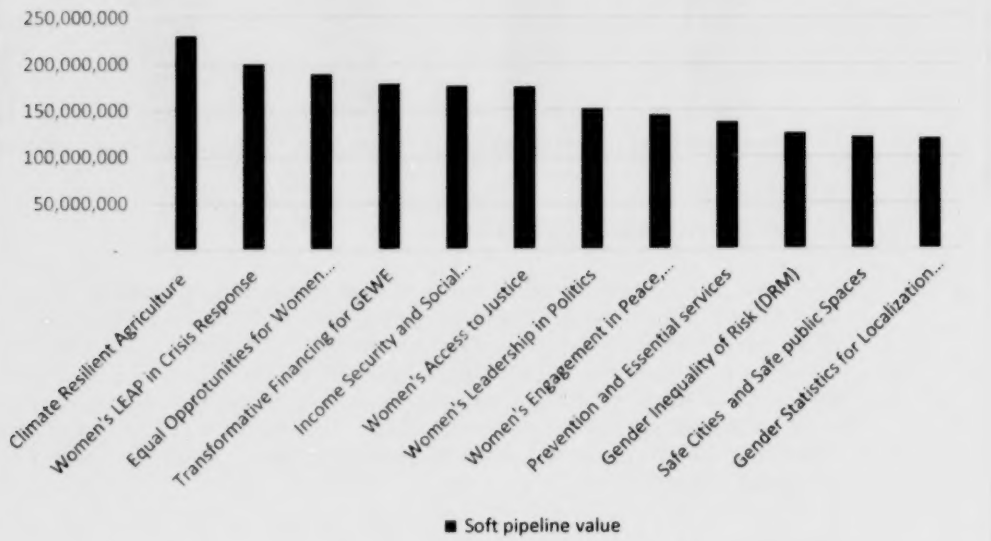


71. Recognizing the value of FPIs as an instrument to drive transformative change through partnerships, they have become the main programme modality in the new Strategic Plan with each output and its corresponding theory of change linked to an FPI. Contrary to UN-Women stand-alone projects, FPIs must take place within a

UN-wide programmatic framework (UN Flagship initiatives, UNDAF common working area, etc.) and most of them are expected to be implemented as a joint programme.

72. As figure 11 shows, UN-Women has rapidly grown its pipeline to fund the FPIs in a balanced manner. A key challenge will be to capitalize each FPI in a balanced manner in the next two years.

Figure 11.



III. Assessment of organizational effectiveness and efficiency

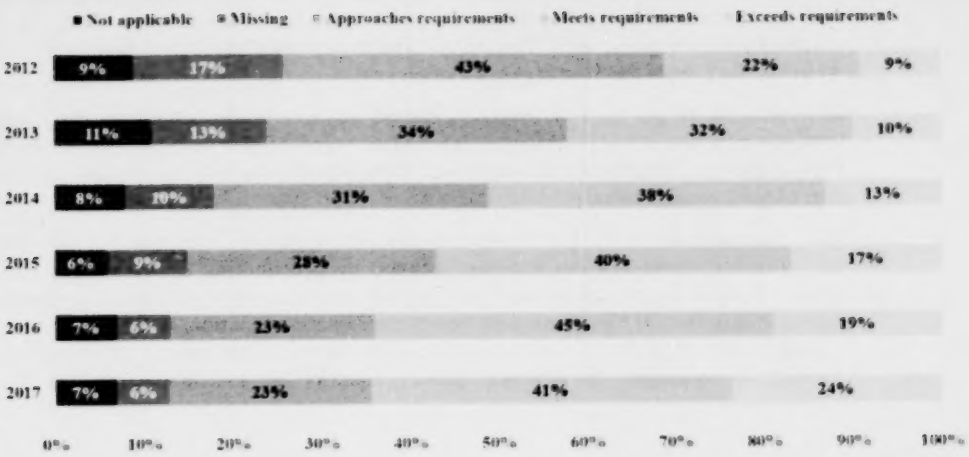
73. Over the course of the 2014–2017 Strategic Plan, UN-Women made significant progress in organizational performance with 26 out of 39 targets achieved. UN coordination, partnerships, advocacy, communications and the knowledge-hub and evaluation functions continued to support development results. In 2017, UN-Women also continued to implement the strategic initiatives from the midterm review of the Strategic Plan to further improve operational effectiveness in the areas of systems and accountability and human resources.

A. UN Coordination

74. Since 2014, UN-Women's work in leading, coordinating and promoting the accountability of the UN system has gained increasing traction and contributed to the achievement of results for women and girls.

75. The UN-SWAP evolved into a signature framework emulated by other priorities within the UN and even by Governments. At the end of 2017, more than 94 per cent of all UN entities had reported on the UN-SWAP for six consecutive years, up from 79 per cent in 2012. There has been significant progress against all indicators, with the proportion of ratings meeting or exceeding requirements more than doubling since the first year of reporting (Figure 12).

Figure 12.



76. As a result of increased inter-agency coordination and training by UN-Women, the number of entities meeting requirements in the area of tracking resources for gender equality has more than doubled since 2012, reaching a total of 28.

77. The success of the first UN-SWAP has led to the development of a strengthened second-generation framework rolled out in 2018, with new performance indicators aligned to the SDGs. In the context of the United Nations Development Group (UNDG), UN-Women also worked with UNDP to finalize and pilot an updated UNCT-SWAP Scorecard in six UNCTs, strengthening alignment between country and corporate levels.

78. UN-Women's full participation in the Chief Executives Board and its subsidiary bodies supported a stronger inclusion of gender perspectives in the work of Heads of Agencies. Similarly, the Executive Director's participation in the Secretary-General's Executive Committee was conducive to the integration of gender perspectives in the work across the three pillars of the UN.

79. In 2017, UN-Women chaired the UNAIDS Committee of Cosponsoring Organizations, which enabled placing a stronger focus on gender equality within the Joint Programme as it went through the refinement of its operating mode. As a member of the UN's H6 partnership, UN-Women brought a focus to responding to root causes of poor health amongst women, children and adolescents. This contributed to improving women and girls' access to health care services and knowledge about their rights. UN-Women was also selected as the 2018 chair of the Inter-Agency Support Group for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

80. Over the 2014–2017 period, UN-Women promoted gender parity in the UN system, culminating in 2017 with the launch of the Secretary-General's System-wide Strategy for Gender Parity, for which UN-Women played a significant leadership and substantive support role.

81. UN-Women's role in the UNDG grew in importance since 2014. Last year, UN-Women spearheaded and field-tested a gender equality marker methodology for UN Country Teams. UN-Women also led the update of the UNDG Resource book for mainstreaming gender in UN common programming at the country level, and the new UNDG Resource Guide for Gender Theme Groups.

82. At the regional and country level, UN-Women continued to focus on the gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda, issuing regional specific guidance notes on the localization of the SDGs and contributing to the development of regional roadmaps. UN-Women, with UN-ESCAP, led the regional review of SDG 5 at the Asia-Pacific Forum for Sustainable Development.

83. Overall, 70 per cent of UNDAFs feature gender-specific results in 2017. All joint programmes are reported to address SDG 5 and 56 per cent have an explicit focus on gender equality, an increase from 2016 when it was the case for only 29 per cent of joint programmes.

84. Throughout 2017, UN-Women provided inputs to the process on the repositioning of the UN development system, by contributing to discussions and reports. It built on lessons learned from its UN coordination work, including those highlighted in the 2016 evaluation of the UN coordination function, to inform the new Strategic Plan 2018–2021, which highlights system-wide coherence and leveraging interagency synergies to advance gender equality as essential strategies for UN-Women.

B. Partnerships

85. Through 2014–2017, UN-Women has grown the number and enhanced the quality of strategic partnerships, with a focus on galvanizing support for gender equality and women's empowerment, supporting the inclusion of diverse groups, as well as engaging a broad range of actors to become allies.

86. In recognition of the vital role played by women's organizations, UN-Women continued its support to the women's movement. This was done by steadily expanding Civil Society Advisory Groups (CSAGs) at the global, regional and national levels and by providing platforms to amplify the voices of women's groups at all levels. In 2017 alone, 14 CSAGS were renewed or established. In line with its universal mandate, UN-Women also strengthened partnerships with civil society partners in Canada, Denmark and the United States, among others, in addition to expanding South-South collaboration opportunities among civil society.

87. UN-Women expanded support amongst key groups by fostering diversity and inspiring joint action through inclusion of men and boys, youth, faith and disability rights activists, indigenous leaders, trade union leaders and other key constituencies in CSAGs and in UN-Women's broader outreach. At the 61st CSW session, UN-Women convened dialogues between faith actors and men and boys on transforming discriminatory norms and gender stereotypes.

88. These broad-based coalitions of support have been key for UN-Women's advocacy. Launched in 2017, the Equal Pay Champions Platform and Equal Pay International Coalition (EPIC) already resulted in increased Government commitments to ensure equal pay for work of equal value. UN-Women's partnership with the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom increased the focus on women's meaningful participating in peace.

89. Since its launch in 2014, HeForShe has engaged 1.3 million men and boys to make commitments to gender equality. The IMPACT 10x10x10 leveraged the initiative's momentum to get concrete commitments from Heads of State, CEOs and University Presidents to make a difference in their sectors. Private sector IMPACT champions agreed to publish on a yearly basis the gender parity data of their company, a significant step to increase transparency and drive change. The Sussex Police and Danone joined the Prime Minister of Canada as HeForShe Thematic Champions to support action in their specific sectors.

90. UN-Women also broadened its engagement with the private sector since 2014, growing the number of partnerships from 12 to 38. UN-Women leverages partnerships for joint advocacy and results for women and girls. In 2017, UN-Women supported the launch of the Unstereotype Alliance, an alliance of 26 global corporations committed to using advertising to eliminate harmful stereotypes and promote non-biased portrayals of women and men. The Global Innovation Coalition for Change with 22 partners from diverse sectors was also launched to focus on innovation, technology and entrepreneurship.

91. Through a partnership with Coca-Cola, 9,000 women in South Africa, Egypt and Brazil were reached with business skills, leadership training, and access to financial assets. UN-Women and Unilever are working to increase the safety of women working across the supply chain, impacting up to 30,000 women. UN-Women's collaboration with the International Olympic Committee was strengthened with a focus on increasing the number of countries empowering disadvantaged girls through sports.

C. Advocacy and communications

92. UN-Women's communications results since 2014 have far exceeded set targets, contributing to increased public awareness of gender equality issues and increased visibility of UN-Women. In 2017, 23,500 media reports featured UN-Women. As part of the "Step It Up Media Compact", more than 60 media outlets committed to boosting women's representation in the newsroom and in news content, including *Thomson Reuters*, *France 24*, *The Huffington Post*, and *Deutsche Welle*.

93. Social media followers reached 6.5 million in 2017, a significant increase from 640,000 in 2014. UN-Women rolled out 88 social media accounts around the world in 14 languages, including on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Weibo, Google+, LinkedIn, Snapchat, and Pinterest. On Twitter, UN-Women's global English account was listed as number 1 for best interaction in the global Twiplomacy study. The Executive Director became the second most followed global leader on LinkedIn.

94. During International Women's Day and CSW61, media coverage reached 90 countries with 4,000 media reports. During the 16 Days of Activism to End Violence against Women, 4,615 media reports in 97 countries were garnered. UN-Women's hashtags, such as #WomensDay, #CSW61, and #orangetheworld created a potential reach of between 167 million and 1.2 billion users. Posts on the global Facebook pages reached a total of 8.2 million unique users.

95. In 2017, the partnership with WPP helped secure USD 500,000 in pro bono ads for UN-Women on major platforms such as Amazon and Spotify. UN-Women's partnership with Facebook resulted in USD 50,000 of free advertising credits.

96. In 2017, UN-Women won the Shorty Award for its #StopTheRobbery campaign and the Webby Award for Best Activism Website for its timeline "Women's Footprint in History". UN-Women also produced its first photographic exhibition on humanitarian issues titled *Vulnerable to Risk, Vital to Recovery*, at UN Headquarters. UN-Women released its second Virtual Reality film to showcase the story of Syrian refugees in Lebanon.

97. UN-Women will continue to expand its efforts and communications channels to increase its public advocacy and enhance its reach, including to new audiences. As the social media landscape continues to evolve, UN-Women will adapt its efforts, driving content and engagement to further boost efforts to positively impact the lives of women and girls.

D. Knowledge hub and South-South cooperation

98. In the period 2014–2017, UN-Women's knowledge hub function has effectively supported development results. Key achievements include the launch of several flagship reports, the growth of gender statistics programmes, increasing participation in gender equality training, and increased commitments as a result of South-South cooperation.

99. Following the successful 2015 launch of Progress of the World's Women, the first regional companion report was launched in Latin America and the Caribbean in 2017, establishing region-specific evidence on women's economic empowerment. In 2017, preparations continued for the next edition of *Progress* with the commissioning of policy-focused background papers and statistical analysis. An evaluation of this flagship report found that the report is widely used, regarded as high quality and positions UN-Women as a global knowledge leader on gender equality and women's empowerment. To further amplify impact, UN-Women will focus on broadening outreach, increasing uptake by key stakeholders and influencing policy processes through the report.

100. A new global monitoring report, *Turning Promises into Action: Gender Equality in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* was finalized for launch in early 2018, providing the first comprehensive assessment of the 2030 Agenda from a gender perspective. Other knowledge work expanded, such as a Policy Brief series, with six new papers published in the Discussion Paper series.

101. In 2017, UN-Women developed 51 courses and attracted 52,441 users from 194 different countries on its eLearning Campus. The "I Know Gender" course was completed by over 24,000 people since its launch in 2015. A community of practice on training for gender equality brings together around 1,900 practitioners to share effective approaches to training for gender equality work.

102. UN-Women continued to grow South-South and triangular cooperation, supporting 62 countries. Specific areas of focus include gender-responsive budgeting, gender statistics and increased cooperation on ending violence against women. South-South and triangular cooperation has been identified as a driver of change in the 2018–2021 Strategic Plan. UN-Women is developing a dedicated strategy to scale up and systematize work in this area.

E. Results-based management, transparency, systems and accountability

103. Since 2014, UN-Women has made significant strides in strengthening its results culture, with enhanced Results-Based Management (RBM) standards and capacity amongst staff. An independent regular quality assessment found a positive trend in the quality of planning and reporting, with 80 per cent of all Strategic Notes qualifying as either 'Excellent' or 'Good', and an improvement in the quality of annual reports.

104. The launch of the Result Management System (RMS) has played a key role in strengthening performance management during this Strategic Plan cycle. The RMS has simplified the process of planning, monitoring and reporting and increased efficiency, accountability and transparency. The RMS allowed UN-Women to link results to resources, improving UN-Women's decision-making process around resource allocations. In 2017, UN-Women developed a project module in line with the latest International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) standards.

105. UN-Women also continued to strengthen and streamline business processes in 2017, running its information systems and infrastructure in a very cost-effective manner by leveraging cloud technologies while fully achieving the target of 99 per cent availability of systems.

106. The Donor Agreement Management System was recognized in 2017 by the Evaluation of the Regional Architecture as a key efficiency tool, providing staff with relevant information on over 900 signed donor agreements. UN-Women also established a Virtual Global Service Centre to provide decentralized organization-wide services for financial donor reporting. This, along with automated result-based financial donor reports, allows UN-Women to deliver over 2,000 donor reports annually.

107. Other ICT automations for financial management since 2014 include reports for revenue, outstanding partner advances and project delivery reports. These systems have enabled a better integration of programme planning and financial management in the 2018–2021 Strategic Plan.

108. UN-Women received its sixth consecutive unqualified audit opinion from the UN Board of Audit. The implementation rate for external audit recommendations significantly increased to 83 per cent. Similarly, there was an increase in UN-Women's implementation rate for internal audit recommendations, which reached 99 per cent.

109. During the 2014–2017 period, UN-Women made considerable progress in embedding its risk management framework into key business processes and strengthening monitoring processes. UN-Women's corporate risk register has allowed to identify and proactively address significant risks in the implementation of the Strategic Plan and informed the development of the new Plan.

F. Human resources

110. Overall, targets for human resources indicators have been met, as UN-Women continued to support the strategic engagement, deployment and development of a flexible, highly skilled and motivated workforce. By the end of 2017, UN-Women's global workforce had reached 2,250 people, reflecting 15 per cent growth over 3 years, with 76 per cent working in field locations. UN-Women's workforce is comprised of 147 different nationalities and a high percentage of women in leadership positions (80 per cent).

111. Key achievements since 2014 include the development of new job design and recruitment systems to shorten the time to recruit; implementation of strategies to promote internal mobility; and embedded systems for workforce planning and review, including regular workforce surveys.

G. Evaluation

112. At corporate level, the Independent Evaluation Office ensured coverage of key impact areas of the Strategic Plan 2014–2017 by providing a comprehensive assessment of UN-Women's normative support, UN system coordination and operational work. This included completing seven corporate evaluations; four meta-analysis; two corporate joint reviews on gender policies and practices; and 116 decentralized evaluations.

113. In 2017, the level of evaluation reports rated satisfactory and above has stabilized at 100 per cent, while reporting on use of evaluative evidence reached 86 per cent.

H. Resource mobilization

114. UN-Women has achieved impressive growth over the last four years. In 2017, UN-Women's revenue reached USD 369 million, its highest total revenue since inception.

115. There has been particularly strong growth in other resources, which reached USD 214.2 million, a 20 per cent increase since 2016 and a 10 per cent annual growth since 2014. USD 28.3 million was directly channelled to FPIs, providing soft-earmarked resources to UN-Women.

116. While resources have increased, they still fall below Integrated Budget targets. UN-Women continues to work with all donors to prioritize funding to regular resources, in line with the QCPR guidance.

117. Member States continue to provide over 80 per cent of UN-Women's funding, with 112 Governments contributing. Private sector contributions from corporations and foundations nearly doubled since 2014 and reached USD 12.3 million in 2017.

118. UN-Women piloted investment funds to five National Committees in 2017 for individual giving programmes. This support contributed to increasing their contributions from USD 1.1 million in 2014 to USD 6.3 million in 2017.

119. Despite improvements, UN-Women's funding continues to be below the ambitions for the Entity. A new resource mobilization strategy will prioritize more diversified overall funding from public and private sectors, including by leveraging innovative sources of financing, such as crowd-funding, digital fundraising, public giving, and engagement with high net-worth individuals.

IV. Conclusions

120. UN-Women supported the achievement of far-reaching and transformative results for women and girls between 2014 and 2017. Two billion women and girls now live in countries with better policies for women's economic empowerment and 1.5 billion women and girls are better protected from violence through stronger legal frameworks. Yet, accelerating and sustaining change remains a challenge. Creating an enabling environment for the achievement of substantive equality continues to be a critical strategy.

121. Since its inception, UN-Women has invested significant efforts in building strong partnerships with the UN system, women's organizations and with other key actors in support of its mandate. Whether it is through Flagship Programming Initiatives, broadening support to new constituencies, or enhanced South-South and triangular cooperation, this impact-focused collaboration has become a centrepiece of the new Strategic Plan 2018–2021. It aligns with Member States' requests for the repositioning of the UN Development System.

122. UN-Women's work for gender equality and women's empowerment takes place in a complex environment. Global visibility for gender equality and women's rights is higher than ever before, but this only represents one step towards transformative change. Transforming the structures that underpin gender inequality requires political will, the right policies, time, resources, and a systematic engagement.

123. This is particularly true for women and girls experiencing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, to respond to the 2030 Agenda's call to leave no one behind. UN-Women is further sharpening measurement of its results to make sure that its programming benefits those who most need it.

124. The gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda represents an unmissable opportunity to bring about transformative change for women and girls. To support Member States and key partners in implementation, UN-Women will build on the assets it has developed in the last four years. The greater integration and synergies that UN-Women has gradually built between its normative support, UN coordination and operational activities are now a standard feature of UN-Women's programming. This is complemented by UN-Women's knowledge leadership, as the entity with the largest knowledge pool on gender equality and women's empowerment. The new Strategic Plan explicitly builds on these and other comparative advantages in support of results.

125. While UN-Women has significantly grown in resources and influence over the last four years, additional investments are required for the Entity to deliver against the ambitions that drove its creation. This includes ensuring that UN-Women has meaningful country presence as part of UN country teams, as well as the means to support the rest of the UN system to coherently step up its efforts for gender equality and women's empowerment.

126. Toward this end, UN-Women looks forward to continuing its strong collaboration with Member States and the Executive Board to fully implement its Strategic Plan and deliver new transformative results for women and girls by 2021.

V. Elements of a decision

The Executive Board may wish to:

(a) Take note of the Annual Report of the Under-Secretary-General/Executive Director on the implementation of the Strategic Plan 2014–2017;

(b) Welcome the progress made since 2014 and achievements as described in the report;

(c) Commend UN-Women on a strong performance to date; and

(d) Encourage UN-Women to continue using lessons from the Strategic Plan 2014–2017 in support of the implementation of the Strategic Plan, 2018–2021.